

Message Text

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SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DHA-02 CU-02 EB-08 COME-00
AGRE-00 STR-04 ACDA-07 /094 W
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R 291827Z APR 77
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7860
INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
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AMEMBASSY BERLIN
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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG
AMEMBASSY DUBLIN
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 BONN 07472

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CSCE, GW
SUBJECT: THE GERMAN APPROACH TO BELGRADE

BEGIN SUMMARY: THE PRINCIPAL GERMAN INTEREST IN
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BELGRADE FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE IS TO ENSURE THAT DETENTE
NOT BECOME UNSTUCK THROUGH EAST-WEST CONFRONTATION OVER
THE IMPLEMENTATION OR NON-IMPLEMENTATION OF THE HELSINKI
FINAL ACT. TO THIS END, THE FRG WILL WORK TO MODERATE
ANY U.S. INTENTION TO PURSUE A TYPE OF HUMAN RIGHTS LINE
AT BELGRADE WHICH MIGHT AGGRAVATE THE CURRENT STRAIN
IN EAST-WEST RELATIONS, ALTHOUGH THE FRG TOO WILL BE

PREPARED TO ADDRESS THIS ISSUE TO PROTECT ITS DOMESTIC POLITICAL FLANK. WHILE THE FRG AGREES WITH NATO AND THE NINE THAT THE BREZHNEV PROPOSALS SHOULD BE HANDLED WITHIN THE ECE, BOTH GERMAN OFFICIALS AND POLITICAL FIGURES WOULD WISH TO BE SOMEWHAT MORE FORTHCOMING AT BELGRADE TO THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S INITIATIVE. CHANCELLOR SCHMIDT AND FONMIN GENSCHER ALSO BELIEVE IT WOULD BE TO THE WEST'S ADVANTAGE TO PUSH FOR GREATER SOVIET INVOLVEMENT IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE AND IN RESOLVING WORLD ECONOMIC PROBLEMS AND FEEL SUCH AN EFFORT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED AT BELGRADE. END SUMMARY.

1. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S FORTHRIGHT STANCE IN SUPPORT OF WORLDWIDE HUMAN RIGHTS, WHILE SUPPORTED BY THE FRG AS A BASIC PHILOSOPHY, IS ALSO NEVERTHELESS FEARED BECAUSE OF A POSSIBLE EASTERN BACKLASH DURING THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE WHICH WOULD RUN COUNTER TO GERMAN INTERESTS. THE FRG VIEW -- AND THAT OF KEY SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC FIGURES (BRANDT AND WEHNER) AS WELL -- IS THAT THERE IS NO REALISTIC ALTERNATIVE TO THE POLICY OF DETENTE AND THAT SECURING MORE HUMAN RIGHTS IS ATTAINABLE ONLY THROUGH MORE DETENTE.

2. AN AGGRESSIVELY MOUNTED U.S. CAMPAIGN IN BELGRADE ON HUMAN RIGHTS MIGHT, IN THE GERMAN VIEW, PREJUDICE FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES FOR ALLEVIATING HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, ESPECIALLY IN EASTERN EUROPE. THE FRG SINCERELY BELIEVES, AND HAS STATISTICS TO PROVE IT, THAT THE STEPPED-UP EMIGRATION OF ETHNIC GERMANS FROM

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EASTERN EUROPE IS ATTRIBUTABLE IN LARGE PART TO THE FINAL ACT AND THAT SUCH EMIGRATION WOULD SUFFER IF THE BATTLE LINES BETWEEN EAST AND WEST HARDENED AT BELGRADE.

3. THE GERMAN DOMESTIC PICTURE IS COMPLICATED BY THE FACT THAT THE CDU/CSU OPPOSITION HAS MADE THE HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE ITS OWN AND HAS BEEN URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO SPEAK OUT AT BELGRADE AGAINST HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS, PARTICULARLY THOSE COMMITTED BY THE GDR. THE OPPOSITION

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 BONN 07472

WELCOMES THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S EMPHASIS ON HUMAN
RIGHTS, BELIEVING THAT IT CAN AND SHOULD BE USED
OFFENSIVELY AGAINST THE EAST AT BELGRADE. THE GOVERN-
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MENT, ON THE OTHER HAND, SEES THE CDU/CSU SHAPING A
DOMESTIC POLITICAL WEAPON WITH WHICH TO ATTACK AN ALREADY
BELEAGUERED COALITION AND ACCUSES THE OPPOSITION OF
WANTING TO USE THE HUMAN RIGHTS CLUB TO CHANGE BELGRADE
INTO CONFRONTATION AND RETURN TO THE COLD WAR.

4. THE RELATIVELY FORTHCOMING GERMAN ATTITUDE TOWARD THE BREZH-

NEV PROPOSALS REFLECTS THE FRG'S DESIRE FOR A MORE ACCOMMODATING WESTERN APPROACH TO BELGRADE. WITHIN THE NINE, THE GERMANS HAVE PUSHED THE IDEA OF CONCESSIONS AND HAVE INDICATED THAT THEY ARE STUDYING THE QUESTION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROPOSAL. THE BASIC GERMAN ARGUMENT HAS BEEN THAT, SINCE THE SOVIETS ARE THE DEMANDEUR, THE WEST SHOULD STUDY WHAT IT COULD TAKE FROM THEIR PROPOSALS, CHANGING THEM AS REQUIRED TO SUIT WESTERN PURPOSES. SOME FONOFF OFFICIALS HAVE HELD THAT THE WEST SHOULD ADOPT A MORE OPEN ATTITUDE ON THIS QUESTION AND BE PREPARED AT LEAST TO DISCUSS THE BREZHNEV PROPOSALS AT BELGRADE.

5. THE SPD LINE, AS SET FORTH IN AN APRIL 18 COMMUNIQUE ISSUED FOLLOWING A MEETING OF THE PARTY PRESIDUM IN BONN, IS THAT AT BELGRADE ONE SHOULD ATTEMPT TO COME TO AN UNDERSTANDING ON SEVERAL CONCRETE PROJECTS IN ORDER TO GIVE NEW IMPULSE TO ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DETENTE. WHILE THIS IS NOT OFFICIAL FRG POLICY, WHICH HOLDS THAT THE ECE IS THE PROPER FORUM FOR DEALING WITH THE CONGRESSES PROPOSAL, THE SPD ATTITUDE IS NONETHELESS INDICATIVE OF HIGH LEVEL GERMAN THINKING WHICH DIVERGES FROM AMERICAN STRATEGY FOR DEALING WITH THE BREZHNEV PROPOSALS.

6. A NEW THEME ARTICULATED INCREASINGLY BY SENIOR GERMAN OFFICIALS, THE CHANCELLOR IN PARTICULAR, IS THAT THE WEST SHOULD MAKE AN EFFORT TO INVOLVE THE SOVIETS MORE IN THE NORTH-SOUTH DIALOGUE. IN SCHMIDT'S VIEW, IT IS A CONFIDENTIAL

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COMPELLING NECESSITY THAT THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER COMMUNIST STATES PARTICIPATE IN OVERCOMING LONG-TERM PROBLEMS AND HELPING STABILIZE THE WORLD ECONOMY. SCHMIDT BELIEVES THE COMMUNIST STATES CANNOT ESCAPE THEIR RESPONSIBILITIES AND THAT EAST AND WEST SHOULD COOPERATE IN FINDING SOLUTIONS TO THE PROBLEMS OF POVERTY.

7. WITH FRG POLICY NOW MOVING IN THE DIRECTION OF TRYING TO INVOLVE THE EAST IN NORTH-SOUTH PROBLEMS AT BELGRADE, THE GERMANS WILL WISH TO EXPLORE U.S. THINKING ON THE SUBJECT DURING OUR MAY BILATERALS. WE NOTE THAT THE FRG NATO REP BEAT A HASTY RETREAT AT THE APRIL 26 POLADS (USNATO 2442) AFTER RAISING THIS TOPIC, BUT WE OBVIOUSLY HAVE NOT HEARD THE LAST OF IT. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR HOW HARD THE GERMANS WILL PUSH THE IDEA. THE FRG'S SPD LEADERSHIP ALREADY SEEMS TO HAVE GAINED THE PHILOSOPHICAL BLESSING OF EUROPEAN SOCIALISTS FOR SUCH A MOVE, BOTH THE CONCRETE ECONOMIC PROJECTS AND

THE NEED TO INVOLVE THE SOVIETS IN THE NORTH-SOUTH
DIALOGUE THEMES HAVING BEEN APPROVED AT THE APRIL 16-17
AMSTERDAM SOCIALIST SUMMIT. IT WOULD SEEM TO US THAT,
FROM THE REACTION AT NATO, THOSE ALLIES WITH SOCIAL
DEMOCRATIC LEADERSHIP MAY NOT YET HAVE GOTTEN THE WORD

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AS HAD THE FRG REP.

8. ANOTHER GERMAN INTEREST AT BELGRADE WILL BE TO AVOID
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FOCUS ON THOSE ISSUES WHICH COULD BE VIEWED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY THROUGH A GERMAN PRISM. THIS INVOLVES THE COMPLEX OF ISSUES REVOLVING AROUND SUCH BASKET I PRINCIPLES AS THE "INVIOABILITY OF FRONTIERS" AND "NON-INTERFERENCE IN INTERNAL AFFAIRS," THE LATTER PRINCIPLE AS IT RELATES TO THE FRG NATIONALITY LAW. WHILE SUCH PROBLEMS WOULD, FROM THE GERMAN STANDPOINT, BEST BE AVOIDED, THE FRG WILL BE PAINFULLY AWARE THAT THE TIME-BOMB TICKING ALONG THE FRG-GDR BORDER COULD EXPLODE AGAIN AT ANY TIME. AS A RESULT OF THE SHOOTING INCIDENTS LAST SUMMER, FONMIN GENSCHER WARNED THEN THAT THE FRG MIGHT HAVE TO RAISE THIS ISSUE AT BELGRADE. THINGS HAVE BEEN QUIET SINCE THEN, HOWEVER, AND THE FRG HAS NO INTENTION OF ROLLING THE WATERS. NEVERTHELESS, THE GERMANS MUST BE PREPARED FOR THE WORST SHOULD SOME UNFORTUNATE INDIVIDUAL BE GUNNED DOWN BY GDR BORDER GUARDS EITHER SHORTLY BEFORE OR WHILE THE FOLLOW-UP CONFERENCE IS IN SESSION.

9. IN SUM, THE FRG APPROACH TO BELGRADE IS BOTH MORE CAUTIOUS AND MORE FORTHCOMING THAN THAT OF THE U.S. IT IS MORE CAUTIOUS ON THE ISSUE OF HUMAN RIGHTS WHICH THE GERMANS WILL WISH TO PUSH LESS HARD, BUT NEVERTHELESS MUST PUSH FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS. IN THE GERMAN VIEW, THE COURSE WHICH THE HUMAN RIGHTS DISCUSSION IN BELGRADE TAKES MAY DETERMINE WHETHER THE DETENTE PROCESS CAN BE STABILIZED AND FURTHER DEVELOPED.

10. IT IS MORE FORTHCOMING ON THE ISSUE OF HOW THE WEST SHOULD REACT TO THE BREZHNEV PROPOSALS. WHILE THE OFFICIAL FRG POSITION TOO IS THAT THEY SHOULD BE HANDLED WITHIN THE ECE CONTEXT, THE GERMANS WOULD PREFER TO ADOPT A MORE POSITIVE APPROACH VIS-A-VIS THE SOVIET LEADER'S INITIATIVE AT BELGRADE. BESIDES FRG OFFICIALS, THIS LINE HAS ALSO BEEN ADVOCATED IN PARTICULAR BY HERBERT WEHNER WHO, AS IN MBFR MATTERS, HAS THE SPD OUT
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Message Attributes

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